

HYMENOPTERA OF THE SIJU CAVE, GARO HILLS, ASSAM.

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I. TRIGLYPHOTHRIX STRIATIDENS EMERY AS A CAVE ANT.

By WILLIAM MORTON WHEELER.

Dr. S. Kemp has sent me for identification several workers and a winged female of a small ant taken by the Zoological Survey of India in the Siju Cave, Garo Hills, Assam. The insects were nesting in complete darkness, 400 feet from the entrance of the cave, under stones in ground heavily manured with bat-guano. Dr. Kemp surmises that the ant is not a regular cavernicolous species and this proves to be true, for it is *Triglyphothrix striatidens* Emery, a highly adaptable Indian species which for some years has been extending its range, not only in the Old but also to the New World. In a paper entitled "An Indian Ant Introduced into the United States" (*Journ. Econ. Ent.* 9, 1916, pp. 566-569, 1 fig.) I cited the known distribution of *T. striatidens* in 1916. It had spread from India to the Bismarck Archipelago, Queensland, Formosa, Ceram, Sumatra, Borneo, Guam, Tunis and Sierra Leone. In America it had been taken in Barbados, Mexico and Audubon Park, Louisiana. As early as 1906 Bingham found it in the propagating pits of the Kew Botanic Garden, and in 1905 and 1908 Donisthorpe recorded it as common in the palm house of the same institution.

In this connection I would note that Mr. F. W. Urich recently sent me from Trinidad two species of ants which he took in the cave inhabited by the singular "guacharo," or fat-bird (*Steatornis caripensis* Humboldt). One of the species, which was living in the nests of the birds, is *Wasmannia auropunctata* Roger, a well-known and widely distributed neotropical ant, which usually nests under stones or bark. The other, which was living in the guano of the guacharo, belongs to a new genus and will be described as *Spelaomyrmex urichi*, gen. et sp. nov. It is evidently a true cavernicolous ant, blind, pale-coloured and covered with long, sparse sense-hairs.

Santschi [Formicidæ. Voyage de Ch. Alluaud et R. Jeannel en Afrique Orientale (1911-12), 1914] has recorded the following ants as having been taken by Alluaud and Jeannel in the caves at Tanga and Shimoni, East Africa: *Ponera dulcis* Forel, *Leptogenys jeanneli* San., *Odontomachus haematoda* L. var. *troglydytes* San., *Dorylus* (*Rhogmus*) *fimbriatus* Shuck., *Monomorium rhopalocerum* Emery subsp. *speluncarum* San., *Strumigenys stygia* San., *Epitritus marginatus* San. and *Prenolepis* (*Nylanderia*) *jaegerskioeldi* Mayr. Probably none of these can be regarded as a true cavernicolous species. Of course, ants that nest in the